



# PRESS RELEASE

## NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture • Washington, DC 20250

Washington Field Office • Olympia, WA 98507

Ag Statistics Hotline: 1-800-727-9540 • [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/)



Released on March 31, 2006

Media Contact: Chris Messer (360)902-1940

[nass-wa@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-wa@nass.usda.gov)

## PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 2006

### Washington's 2006 Crop Acreage Changes Mixed

OLYMPIA, Wash., March 31, 2006--According to a survey conducted in the first two weeks of March 2006, Washington growers expect to plant fewer acres of barley and field corn in 2006 compared with 2005 while increasing acres of spring wheat, dry beans, hay and sugarbeets. "Winter wheat and oat acreage is unchanged from last year," according to Chris Messer, Director of the Washington Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service. "Above normal precipitation across the Pacific Northwest improved soil moisture with the snowpack in the upper elevations expected to provide an additional boost in the spring."

Nationwide, **winter and spring barley** acres planted for harvest in 2006 is estimated at 3.67 million acres compared with 3.88 million acres in 2005. If realized, this will be the lowest barley acreage on record. Washington producers will seed 205,000 acres, 10,000 acres fewer than last year and the lowest acreage since 1953. Oregon's barley acres dipped to 50,000 and Idaho's fell from 630,000 to 600,000 acres, the lowest since 1968.

**Sugarbeet** acreage in Washington rose 100 acres to 1,800 which is the first year-to-year increase in five years but still the lowest acreage ever in the State. Nationwide, the 2006 crop year is expected to total 1.37 million acres, 6 percent higher than the 2005 planted acreage. Factories have been contracting more acres this year to compensate for tight sugar stocks caused by last year's hurricanes in the sugarcane-producing Gulf Coast States.

Acres of **hay** for harvest in Washington rebounded to 780,000 acres, up 40,000 acres from 2005. Oregon's acres declined 20,000 acres while Idaho's acreage was unchanged. Nationally producers expect to harvest 61.5 million acres, down fractionally from 2005.

**Spring wheat** seedings for Washington are expected to increase to 460,000 acres, from 430,000 acres in 2005 but 70,000 acres below two years ago. Idaho growers expect to drill 470,000 acres, unchanged from 2005, while Oregon growers will seed 15,000 fewer acres. In the United States, growers intend to plant 13.9 million acres, down 1 percent from 2005. Of the total, about 13.2 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. Large acreage decreases in the Dakotas and Minnesota were mostly offset by a large increase in Montana.

**Field corn** acres in Washington slipped for the second year to 135,000 acres, from 150,000 acres in 2005. Oregon and Idaho growers expect to plant 3,000 and 5,000 fewer acres, respectively.

**Dry bean (including Garbanzos/Chickpeas)** acres in Washington are expected to increase to 70,000 acres, the largest acreage since 1981 when it was also 70,000 acres. The 2006 crop in Idaho is unchanged from 2005, at 100,000 acres, but up 3,000 acres in Oregon to 12,000 planted acres.

Planted acres of **oats** in Washington is expected to reach 25,000 acres in 2006, the same as in 2005. A total of 4.32 million acres of oats is expected to be seeded by U.S. growers for the 2006 crop year. This will be up 2 percent from last year's planted acres.

**Surveys and Estimates:** These estimates are the results of the **March 2006 Prospective Planting Survey** conducted during the first two weeks of March 2006. These prospective planting estimates can and do change based on conditions at planting time. If growers continue to receive moisture, producers may decide to plant more spring crops. Our June Acreage survey will measure actual plantings. These estimates will be updated with the June Acreage Survey results which will be released on June 30, 2006. The first estimate of winter wheat production will be published on May 12, 2006 and the first estimate of spring wheat and barley production will be published July 12, 2006.

## Prospective Plantings: Selected States & United States, 2004-2006 1/

Crop	Washington			Oregon		Idaho		United States		
	2004	2005	Ind. 2006 2/	2005	Ind. 2006 2/	2005	Ind. 2006 2/	2004	2005	Ind. 2006 2/
	<b>1,000 Acres</b>									
All Wheat	2,330	2,280	2,310	955	910	1,260	1,240	59,674	57,229	57,128
Winter	1,800	1,850	1,850	830	800	770	750	43,350	40,433	41,404
Spring	530	430	460	125	110	470	470	13,763	14,036	13,899
Barley	250	215	205	65	50	630	600	4,527	3,875	3,667
Oats	20	25	25	40	45	90	80	4,085	4,246	4,324
Corn	170	150	135	53	50	235	230	80,929	81,759	78,019
Dry Beans 3/	30.0	49.0	70.0	9.0	12.0	100.0	100.0	1,354.3	1,665.0	1,710.3
Sugarbeets 4/	3.8	1.7	1.8	9.8	11.0	169.0	188.0	1,345.6	1,294.8	1,371.8
All Hay 5/	790	740	780	1,000	980	1,410	1,410	61,966	61,649	61,478

1/ Includes area planted in preceding fall.

2/ Intended plantings in 2006 as indicated by reports from farmers.

3/ Excludes beans grown for garden seed.

4/ Relates to year of intended harvest in all States except CA. In CA, relates to year of intended harvest for fall planted beets in central CA and to year of planting for overwintered beets in central and southern CA.

5/ Intended area harvested in 2006 as indicated by reports from farmers.

To access the entire release, the complete narrative and tables, point to:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Washington/Current\\_News\\_Release/prosplnt.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Washington/Current_News_Release/prosplnt.pdf)

#

Find agricultural statistics for Washington State at [www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Washington/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Washington/)